

Message Text

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ACTION AGR-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 EB-11 FDRE-00 COME-00

TRSE-00 AID-20 IGA-02 SS-15 NSC-10 H-03 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6111

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, IN

SUBJ: WEEKLY FOODGRAIN SITUATION

REF: NEW DELHI 9025

BEGIN SUMMARY: MONSOON PERFORMANCE HAS BEEN STRENGTHENING SINCE THE WEEK ENDING JULY 25. CUMULATIVE RAINFALL FROM JUNE 1 TO AUGUST 8 WAS NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL IN 31 OF THE 35 WEATHER ZONES. DOMESTIC WHEAT PROCUREMENT NOW TOTALS APPROXIMATELY 4.4 MILLION TONS. IMPORTS OF WHEAT AND COARSE GRAINS DURING THE MONTH OF JULY TOTALED APPROXIMATELY 130,000 METRIC TONS BRINGING TOTAL IMPORTS DURING JANUARY-JULY TO APPROXIMATELY 1,546,000 TONS. GENERALLY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY IN THE PAST WEEK THERE HAS BEEN INCREASED NUTATION IN PROTEST AGAINST
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CONTINUING SHORTAGES AND INCREASE IN PRICES OF ESSENTIAL

COMMODITIES, ESPECIALLY FOOD. END SUMMARY

1. MONSOON PERFORMANCE HAS BEEN STRENGTHENING SINCE THE WEEK ENDING JULY 25. DURING THE PAST WEEK ENDING AUGUST 8, MONSOON ACTIVITY WAS VIGOROUS THROUGHOUT MOST OF INDIA EXCLUDING GANGETIC WEST BENGAL, BIHAR, ORISSA, MADHYA PRADESH, GUJARAT AND KERALA. OF THE 35 WEATHER ZONES, 24 ZONES RECEIVED NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL RAINFALL DURING THE WEEK. CUMULATIVE RAINFALL FROM JUNE 1 TO AUGUST 8 WAS NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL IN BUQ OF THE 35 WEATHER ZONES. THESE 31 WEATHER ZONES ACCOUNT FOR APPROXIMATELY 84 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL KHARIF CEREAL GRAIN PRODUCTION IN THE COUNTRY, USING AS A BASE THE DISTRIBUTION OF KHARIF PRODUCTION DURING 1970-71. THIS SITUATION IS SUBSTANTIALLY BETTER THAN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD OF TIME IN 1972 WHEN ONLY 11 ZONES ACCOUNTING FOR 22 PERCENT OF THE KHARIF CEREAL GRAIN PRODUCTION WERE IN THE NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL RAINFALL CATEGORIES. THE AREAS WHERE RAINFALL HAS SO FAR BEEN BELOW NORMAL DURING THE CURRENT MONSOON SEASON ARE: SOUTH BIHAR, EAST MADHYA PRADESH, EAST GUJARAT AND COASTAL ANDHRA PRADESH.

2. DOMESTIC WHEAT PROCUREMENT HAS NOW RISEN FROM 4.3 MILLION TONS DURING THE WEEK ENDING JULY 20 TO APPROXIMATELY 4.4 MILLION TONS CURRENTLY. WE DO NOT EXPECT SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL QUANTITIES TO BE PROCURED.

3. WHEAT AND COARSE GRAIN IMPORTS DURING THE MONTH OF JULY TOTALED APPROXIMATELY 130,000 METRIC TONS COMPOSED OYZ-17,400 TONS OF WHEAT AND 90,200 TONS OF MILO FROM THE US AND 22,400 METRIC TONS OF MILO FROM ARGENTINA. THIS BRINGS TOTAL IMPORTS DURING JANUARY-JULY OF THIS YEAR TO APPROXIMATELY 1,546,000 TONS. THERE WERE NO WHEAT OR COARSE GRAIN IMPORTS DURING JULY-DECEMBER 1972.

4. GENERALLY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY IN THE PAST WEEK THERE HAS BEEN INCREASED AGITATION IN PROTEST AGAINST CONTINUING SHORTAGES AND INCREASE IN PRICES OF THE ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES ESPECIALLY FOOD. DETAILS ON THESE DISTURBANCES CONTAINED SEPTEL.

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5. CALCUTTA CONGEN REPORTS SHARP INCREASES IN RICE PRICES IN THE OPEN MARKET. RICE PRICES IN MANY AREAS OF EASTERN INDIA ARE SAID TO HAVE RISEN BY AN AVERAGE OF 15 PERCENT DURING THE LAST WEEK. IN ADDITION TO THE DEPLETED LOCAL FOOD STOCKS FOR THE PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM, THE STRIKE BY THE LOCOMOTIVE TECHNICIANS AND FIREMEN SINCE THE BEGINNING OF AUGUST HAS BEEN DISRUPTING THE MOVEMENT OF FOODGRAINS FROM SURPLUS TO DEFICIT AREAS.

6. COMMENTS - AFTER TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE ERRATIC
DISTRIBUTION OF RAINFALL DURING JUNE-JULY THIS YEAR AND
ASSUMING AVERAGE WEATHER CONDITIONS FOR THE BALANCE OF THIS
CROP YEAR WE ESTIMATE TOTAL FOODGRAIN PRODUCTION IN 1973-74
WILL BE IN THE VICINITY OF 105 MILLION METRIC TONS AS
COMPARED TO THE GOI TARGET OF 115 MILLION METRIC TONS.
OUR ESTIMATE FOR LAST YEAR'S PRODUCTION IS 95 MILLION
TONS.
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